Percy Charges Duplication In Federal Police Activity

By Spencer Rich
Washington Post Staff Writer

Sen. Charles H. Percy (R-Ill.) said yesterday that the federal government has 169,625 employees engaged in police, intelligence-gathering and investigative activities, at a cost of over $2.6 billion a year.

"There is so much duplication," said Percy. ... "Everyone's got to have their own intelligence unit — just like everyone's got to have his own computer."

The figures, compiled by the General Accounting Office at Percy's request, don't include classified data on the Central Intelligence Agency, National Security Agency and "certain sensitive activities of the Defense Department."

As examples of overlap, Percy said that 12 different units handle personnel security for federal employees; that several agencies, like Treasury, have three or four different guard units; and that three separate agencies with 1,214 officers — Capitol police, Supreme Court police and Library of Congress police — are "all patrolling the same four-block area" at the Capitol that is also patrolled by "a heavy concentration of Washington Metropolitan police."

In order to determine precisely what some of the investigative and intelligence units are doing and to develop recommendations against bureaucratic duplication, Percy has turned over the report to the Senate Budget Committee.

The figures released by Percy show that more than half of the 169,625 persons in security and intelligence are in the military, including a large number of military police and guards for defense installations. Other large contingents are in the Justice Department (35,264, including 19,655 in the FBI, 5,590 in the Immigration Service, 4,247 U.S. prison guards and 3,666 in the Drug Enforcement Administration) and in the Treasury (18,317, including 4,556 working for the IRS, 2,995 in the Secret Service, 2,491 to enforce the alcohol and tobacco tax and firearms laws and 7,747 in the Customs Service).

But almost every little agency seems to have some investigative or security unit of its own. For example, the Commerce Department has eight persons investigating the Public Works and Economic Devlelopment Act.

Commerce also has 52 people policing violations of the regulations of the Office of Minority Business Enterprise and the export control laws.

The Department of Health, Education and Welfare has 15 persons investigating frauds and corruption by HEW employees.